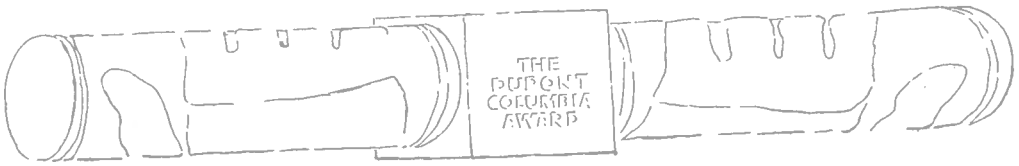

Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards

1972-1973

Low Memorial Library, Columbia University

December 13, 1973

Award Winners

Arthur Holch and ABC News
for
"Chile: Experiment in Red"

Irv Drasnin and CBS News
for
"You and the Commercial"

Robert Northshield and NBC News
for
"The Sins of the Fathers"

Dick Hubert and Group W
for
". . . And the Rich Shall Inherit the Earth"

WBBM-TV, Chicago
for
"The Rape of Paulette"

WTIC-TV, Hartford
for
"The Nine-Year-Old in Norfolk Prison"

KGW-TV, Portland, Oregon
for
"Death of a Sideshow"

Elizabeth Drew and NPACT
for
"Thirty Minutes With . . ."

KNX Radio, Los Angeles
for
Editorials on important community issues

The Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism

of

Columbia University

requests the pleasure of your company

at the fifth presentation of the

Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards

in Broadcast Journalism

on Thursday, the thirteenth of December

at five-thirty in the afternoon

The Rotunda of the Low Memorial Library

Reception following

Please reply on
the enclosed card

Office of Public Information
Columbia University
New York, New York 10027
Telephone: (212) 280-5496
- -
Fred Knubel, Director

FOR USE ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 3,

ATTENTION EDITORS
LOCAL ANGLE
SEE PAGE

The winners of the fifth annual Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards in Broadcast Journalism were announced yesterday (Sunday) by Dr. William J. McGill, president of Columbia.

The awards for the broadcasting year 1972-1973, which are administered by the University's Graduate School of Journalism under the direction of Marvin G. Barrett, will be presented to:

-- KGW-TV, Portland, Ore., for "Death of a Sideshow"

-- WBBM-TV, Chicago, for "The Rape of Paulette"

-- WTIC-TV, Hartford, for "The Nine-Year-Old in Norfolk Prison"

-- Arthur Holch and ABC News for "Chile: Experiment in Red"

-- Irv Drasnin and CBS News for "You and the Commercial"

-- Robert Northshield and NBC News for "The Sins of the Fathers"

-- Dick Hubert and Group W for "And the Rich Shall Inherit the Earth"

-- Elizabeth Drew and NPACT for "Thirty Minutes With . . . "

-- KNX Radio, Los Angeles, for editorials on important community issues

The winners will receive a silver sculpture designed by Louis

-more-

Kahn, the eminent architect, at ceremonies Thursday, December 13, on Columbia's Morningside Heights campus. The event will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the first DuPont Awards and the fifth of the establishment of the Awards at Columbia.

The selection of the winners by a seven-member jury is made in conjunction with the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Survey of Broadcast Journalism, an independent study of news and public affairs broadcasting across the country. The most recent Survey, entitled "The Politics of Broadcasting," was published earlier this year by Thomas Y. Crowell, Inc.

The DuPont-Columbia jurors are: Elie Abel, dean of the Graduate School of Journalism; Richard T. Baker, acting dean of the School; Edward W. Barrett, director of the Communications Institute, Academy for Educational Development; Dorothy I. Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women; John Houseman, director of the Drama Division at the Juilliard School, Lincoln Center; Sig Mickelson, former president of CBS News, and Michael Novak, author and educator. Louis G. Cowan, director of special projects at the Journalism School, is adviser to the program.

In commenting on this year's judging, the jurors observed: "Five years ago when Columbia began administering the Awards, the exhibits submitted by local stations, however worthy and well-meant, were generally not of network quality. The subject matter tended to be parochial, the technical competence frequently was low. By this past summer, the situation was greatly changed. Five years ago there was one local documentary which the DuPont jurors found equal in scope and

technique to the best network product. This year there were dozens. The same improvement was noted in other areas of news and public affairs."

"To recognize this striking increase in top-quality public affairs programming, we have voted eleven citations for distinction in broadcast journalism in addition to the nine regular DuPont-Columbia Awards. This is the first year such citations have been given. Nine of the eleven will be presented to local radio or TV stations." The citation winners are:

-- KCET-TV Los Angeles, for minority coverage

-- George T. Osterkamp and KPIX-TV, San Francisco, for "And Now the News"

-- KQED-TV, San Francisco, for "The Great California Land Grab"

-- Geraldo Rivera and WABC-TV, New York, for "The Littlest Junkie: A Children's Story"

-- WITI-TV, Milwaukee, for "Post Vietnam Syndrome"

-- William Turque and WNBC-TV, New York, for "Fort Apache"

-- Craig Gilbert and WNET/13, New York, for "An American Family"

-- Bill Leonard and WRC-TV, Washington, D.C., for "Families on the Road to Somewhere"

-- Don Hewitt and CBS News for "60 Minutes"

-- The Rev. Donald J. Casey and World Horizon Films for "The Healer" and "Campamento"

-- WJBO Radio, Baton Rouge, for investigative reporting

Among those presenting the Awards this year at the special 30th anniversary ceremony will be Lowell Thomas who won the third annual

DuPont Award in 1945 and is the American with the longest consecutive record of broadcasting in history. On December 13 his broadcast on the CBS Radio network, now on the air for 43 years, will originate at the ceremony. Also presenting an award will be Pauline Frederick, who in 1953 became the first woman commentator to be honored with a DuPont Award; she will make the presentation to the second woman journalist singled out for the same honor, Elizabeth Drew. Senator Mark Hatfield will make the presentation to KGW-TV Portland, the first Oregon station in 30 years to have won a DuPont Award.

The DuPont-Columbia program was established at Columbia in 1968 through an agreement between the Alfred I. duPont Awards Foundation and the Graduate School of Journalism. The program is funded by the Foundation, named for the Florida financier who died in 1935. The Foundation was created in 1943 by his widow, the late Jessie Ball duPont, "to stimulate distinguished performance throughout the United States on the part of those who participate in or who are responsible for the dissemination of news and education through mass media, especially through radio and television."

Following are details on the winners:

"Death of a Sideshow," a 90-minute program on Portland's skid row, was produced by the news staff of KGW-TV over a period of 16 months. The jurors' comment: "Perhaps the year's most successful example of presenting the totally rejected as worthy of the average American viewer's attention . . . proving what a small, hard-pressed news staff with a small budget can do to stir up and inform its own community."

Of WBBM-TV's "The Rape of Paulette" the jurors said: "An unflinching look at the crime of rape which enlisted the cooperation of a number of attractive and articulate women who had been victims of some repellently brutal attacks. The women spoke out on a subject which has too long been distorted by inverted social taboos and male hang-ups and on police and legal practices which frequently punish the victims much more severely than the perpetrators of the crime."

WTIC-TV Hartford's "The Nine-Year-Old in Norfolk Prison" was the work of two young investigative reporters Jean Sablon, black, and Brad Davis, white, who had a particularly impressive record for the season. The jurors chose from among several of their first-class investigative reports the hour-long program, "an inquiry into the justice of the conviction of a mentally retarded 28-year-old black man for murder. Under persistent examination, the evidence slowly eroded and a vivid picture of legal haste and callousness appeared."

Arthur Holch and ABC News' "Chile: Experiment in Red," according to the jurors, examined a "then neglected and very timely subject with thoroughness and objectivity. Unfolding events proved the 60-minute examination of the South American nation an accurate background for the chaos which descended a few weeks after the program was put on the air."

Of "You and the Commercial" from Irv Drasnin and CBS News, the jurors commented: "In sixty carefully balanced minutes (without commercial interruption) the program asked searching questions about the motives and manners of TV's principal backers, the advertisers of America. What resulted was not only an exceptionally well-made,

entertaining and illuminating show, but possibly the bravest network documentary of the year."

About Robert Northshield and NBC News' "The Sins of the Fathers" the jurors said: "Of a sure-fire subject, the orphaned and abandoned children of the Vietnamese war, Northshield made an essay which went beyond predictability and established him as the media's unquestioned poet of the youthful innocent adrift in a violent and heartless grown-up world."

Of Dick Hubert and Group W's "And the Rich Shall Inherit the Earth" the jurors said: "The definitive treatment of the growth of the big agricultural conglomerates and the tragically rapid disappearance of the small family farm in America. The program's selection and presentation of illustrative detail to tell its sad story was impeccable -- the result of the unbeatable conjunction of experience and concern."

Of Elizabeth Drew and NPACT's "Thirty Minutes With . . . " the jurors said: "An admirable series of interview portraits . . . TV interrogation at its most informed and incisive."

Of KNX Radio, Los Angeles, the jurors said: "Their editorials not only spoke out daily on important community issues, but reached out to bring in voices in the community who could speak with equal authority and conviction on matters of controversy and concern."

Office of Public Information
Columbia University
New York, New York 10027
Telephone: (212) 280-5496
- -
Fred Knubel, Director

FOR USE ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

"The persistence, courage and increasing skill of broadcast journalists as individuals and as a profession" and "the growing ability among a supposedly apathetic and restless American public to sit still and pay attention" are the principal reasons for a marked improvement in individual examples of broadcast journalism noted this year by the jurors of the Alfred I. duPont Columbia University Survey and Awards in Broadcast Journalism.

A special report by the DuPont Program's director, Marvin Barrett, issued yesterday (Saturday), states that the incidence of top quality news and public affairs programming was all the more striking since those wielding power over broadcasting -- government, sponsors and management -- gave the journalists "remarkably little encouragement to do their best."

The report was issued in conjunction with the 30th anniversary of the DuPont Awards and the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Awards at Columbia. The Awards ceremony will be held at Columbia December 13.

"Ironically, those responsible for the discomfort of broadcast

-more-

journalists were often responsible -- willingly or not -- for their triumphs," the report stated. "Attempts at government interference peaked, dramatically declined, and then rose again. Management became both more enthusiastic and more intrusive. Sponsors, with a few significant exceptions, continued to withhold their support (except for the sure thing). However, the public seemed to lose some of its apathy. And the newsmen themselves, after beginning the year in desperation, ended it with a surge of hope."

The touchstone as far as government pressure was concerned was Watergate. A news director in Birmingham, Ala., one of more than 200 responding to the DuPont-Columbia Report, comments: "My personal opinion of the significance of Watergate is that it was journalism's finest hour . . . print journalism that is. Electronic journalism was a day late and a dollar short. But once electronic journalists began their coverage, it was far-ranging and comprehensive."

Watergate's impact on broadcast journalism took many forms. Said one Middle Western news director: "There is less public hostility toward the media in general and toward television specifically. It (Watergate) has boosted our credibility locally, and has created a better atmosphere for acceptance of local investigative reporting. And viewer comments about biased news coverage have decreased. . . . Investigative reporting is suddenly fashionable." Of the news directors participating 17 percent found a notable decrease in complaints of bias attributable to Watergate.

More astonishing, according to the report, was the fact that "those assumed bubble-heads, the nation's housewives, old folks and shut-ins, not only tolerated up to six hours of Senate hearings a day

on four networks simultaneously; they gave the hearings a significant margin in the ratings over the fare they were supposed to be incurably addicted to, even after they had a choice."

From Charleston, W. Va., a news director wrote: "Watergate came at a time when journalism was being threatened by a seemingly planned assault by government. It vindicated journalism of all charges made by an Administration that was intent on, I believe, breaking down the credibility of the press and subduing it."

Watergate was given as the reason for a new hope and pride in their profession by an amazing 72 percent of those reporting. According to the report, network news viewing, which had given evidence of declining in recent years, was almost back to 1969 highs. Local newscast ratings rose even higher, outranking network newscasts in eight out of the ten top TV markets.

Profits from broadcasting also had recovered. Local news budgets and staffs oontinued to expand. Thirty-one percent of local stations reported an increase of budget and 25 percent in staff, for newscasting. Increased money earmarked for investigative journalism was reported by 15 percent of the stations. Many of these were undertaking serious investigative reporting for the first time.

Documentaries, however, "the form which remained the most demanding and rewarding in the repertoire of all journalism," were given the lowest priority, with only 14 percent of the stations reporting increased documentary budgets and 8 percent more staff.

Network documentaries were also hard hit, with no weekly prime-time commitment to news and public affairs anywhere on network

schedules and NBC's "First Tuesday," one of two major network magazine shows, cancelled.

Reluctant sponsors were frequently cited as the reason for not getting documentaries on the air. One news director reported of his DuPont Award-winning documentary: "No prospective sponsor wanted to attach his name to it. Our advertisers, most of whom professed a sincere concern about the community of which they are an important part, shy away from buying programs which are designed to point and sometimes offer solutions to troubled areas of that community. It is difficult to continue to do significant documentaries without sponsorship because of the enormous costs involved."

But more than intrusive government and unwilling sponsors, the greatest threat to quality broadcasting of news and public affairs, according to the report, was an oversolicitous management. "The manipulation of local news," said the report, "which neither the networks nor the White House had been able to achieve, was making great strides in the name of statistics and audience and sponsor approval. On the surface, this process seemed to have nothing to do with satisfying someone's political or social bias. But the end result was much the same -- to subvert serious coverage of controversial subjects."

Although market researchers and consultants called in by management to improve news ratings were not a new phenomenon, more newsmen than ever before expressed alarm at their growing prevalence and power. One news director in Florida commented: "These agencies have taken hold of many stations and virtually dictate news policy in

absentia by the use of their survey research techniques. Too often stations with consultants end up trying to present news only as the survey results suggest the people want. But lost in this concept is that a professional journalist should have the ability and news judgment to determine what is important and significant." From the West Coast another broadcaster said:"In the past year I've spoken with several news directors who are seriously considering other fields of endeavor. . . . There aren't many major markets left where stations don't retain an outside media research and/or consulting service . . . which will screen your shows, critique them, tell you what you're doing wrong, suggest special features to include, etc., etc. Before too many good newsmen leave us, our managers and owners must come to grips with this very real problems. . . . Otherwise, what television news in the future will be is something none of us in the business will recognize -- an entertaining half hour or hour with very little of import or significance within it."

The awards in conjunction with which the report was issued include:

-- KGW-TV, Portland, Ore., for "Death of a Sideshow"

-- WBBM-TV, Chicago, for "The Rape of Paulette"

-- WTIC-TV, Hartford, for "The Nine-Year-Old in Norfolk Prison"

-- Arthur Holch and ABC News for "Chile: Experiment in Red"

-- Irv Drasnin and CBS News for "You and the Commercial"

-- Robert Northshield and NBC News for "The Sins of the Fathers"

-- Dick Hubert and Group W for "And the Rich Shall Inherit the Earth"

-- Elizabeth Drew and NPACT for "Thirty Minutes With . . . "

-- KNX Radio, Los Angeles, for editorials on important community issues.

This year for the first time citations for distinction will be presented. Those being awarded them are:

-- KCET-TV, Los Angeles, for minority coverage

-- George T. Osterkamp and KPIX-TV, San Francisco, for "And Now the News"

-- KQED-TV, San Francisco, for "The Great California Land Grab"

-- Geraldo Rivera and WABC-TV, New York, for "The Littlest Junkie: A Children's Story"

-- WITI-TV, Milwaukee, for "Post Vietnam Syndrome"

-- William Turque and WNBC-TV, New York, for "Saturday Night at Fort Apache"

-- Craig Gilbert and WNET-TV, New York, for "An American Family"

-- Bill Leonard and WRC-TV, Washington, D.C., for "Families on the Road to Somewhere"

-- Don Hewitt and CBS News for "60 Minutes"

-- The Rev. Donald J. Casey and World Horizon Films for "The Healer" and "Campamento"

-- WJBO Radio, Baton Rouge, for investigative reporting.

The DuPont-Columbia jurors for 1972-1973 are: Elie Abel, dean of the Graduate School of Journalism; Richard T. Baker, acting dean of the School; Edward W. Barrett, director of the Communications Institute, Academy for Educational Development; Dorothy I. Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women; John Houseman, director of the Drama Division at the Juilliard School, Lincoln Center; Sig Mickelson,

former president of CBS News, and Michael Novak, author and educator. Louis G. Cowan, director of special projects at the Journalism School, is adviser to the program.

12.4.73 14,346